

LACDMH PRESENTS THE 2015 TAY CONFERENCE

By Karen Zarsadiaz-Ige, Public Information Officer



On Monday, May 18, 2015, the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) hosted its Transition Age Youth (TAY) Conference at the California Endowment in downtown Los Angeles. The all-day conference provides participants with the latest information and resources to deliver mental health services and support to TAY who are experiencing emotional, behavioral and/or co-occurring substance use challenges. The conference reached full capacity with 300 people in attendance.

The day began with a welcome and introductions from TAY Mental Health Clinical Program Manager Mary Romero, LCSW; TAY Deputy Director Terri Boykins, LCSW; and LACDMH Director Marvin Southard, DSW.

"When we exclude people, we harm them," explained Dr. Southard. "Our hope in our work with TAY is to find ways to get our youth included in the fabric of our community, so they know they are valuable and they have gifts to give."



Dr. Southard was followed by the inspirational morning keynote speaker, Enrique Legaspi. Afterward, success stories were shared by a group of TAY panelists, facilitated by TAY Navigator Chevvv Cheung, LCSW. The second morning keynote speaker, Suzana Flores, PsyD, then spoke to the audience about the effect of Facebook on us.

Conference participants later attended workshops covering a variety of topics, including commercial sexual exploitation of children, co-occurring substance use – synthetics, housing and employment strategies, peer-to-peer engagement and advocacy, social media, immigration and unaccompanied minors, juvenile justice, and depression and substance use in runaway and homeless youth.

The remainder of the day finished up with a poetry presentation by Get Lit – Words Ignite, and a presentation from the afternoon keynote speaker, Jennifer Lingenfelter, PsyD.

